Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

Shew, J.J., E.J. Censky, and R. Powell. 2002. *Ameiva corvina.*

Ameiva corvina Cope
Sombrero Island Ameiva

Ameiva corvina Cope 1861:312. Type locality, "island of Sombrero." Lectotype (designated by Censky and Paulson 1992), Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (ANSP) 9116, an adult male, collected by J.B. Hansen, date of collection not known (examined by EJC). See **Remarks**.

• **CONTENT.** No subspecies are recognized.

• **DEFINITION.** *Ameiva corvina* is a moderately sized member of the genus *Ameiva* (maximum SVL of males = 133 mm, of females = 87 mm; Censky and Paulson 1992). Granular scales around the body number 139–156 ($\bar{x}$ = 147.7 ± 2.4, N = 16), ventral scales 32–37 ($\bar{x}$ = 34.1 ± 0.3, N = 16), fourth toe subdigital lamellae 34–41 ($\bar{x}$ = 38.1 ± 0.5, N = 15), fifteenth caudal verticil 29–38 ($\bar{x}$ = 33.3 ± 0.6, N = 17), and femoral pores (both legs) 50–63 ($\bar{x}$ = 57.3 ± 0.8, N = 16)(Censky and Paulson 1992). See **Remarks**.

Dorsal and lateral coloration is very dark brown to slate black and usually patternless (one individual, MCZ 6141, has a trace of a pattern with faded spots on the posterior third of the dorsum and some balck blotches on the side of the neck). Brown color often is more distinct on the heads of males. The venter is very dark blue-gray. Green or blue speckling is evident on the venter and tail of some specimens.

• **DIAGNOSIS.** *Ameiva corvina* is most similar to *A. corax*, another melanistic species found on Little Scrub Island on the adjacent Anguilla Bank. These species can be distinguished by fewer fourth toe lamellae (36.8 ± 2.3) and more femoral pores in *A. corax* (62.1 ± 3.1). See **Remarks**.

• **DESCRIPTIONS.** The most complete description of the species is found in Censky and Paulson (1992). Additional descriptions include the original by Cope (1861) and others by Cope (1862), Barbour and Noble (1915), Underwood (1962), Lazell (1964), and Schwartz and Henderson (1991). Very brief descriptions are included in some of the checklists cited below.

• **ILLUSTRATIONS.** A color photograph was included in Censky and Powell (2001).

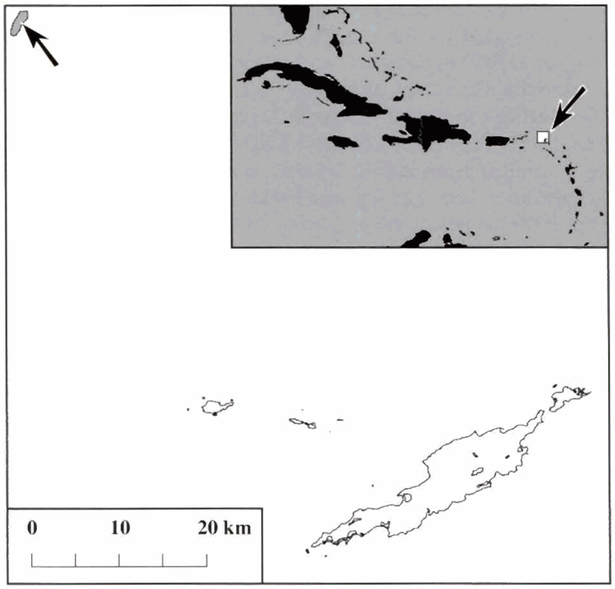
• **DISTRIBUTION.** *Ameiva corvina* is endemic to Sombrero Island, where it is quite common around the lighthouse and where vegetation occurs. The range was illustrated by Schwartz and Henderson (1991) and Censky and Paulson (1992).

Barbour (1914) and Barbour and Noble (1915) erroneously reported the species from Anguilla (Barbour 1930b).

• **FOSSIL RECORD.** None.

• **PERTINENT LITERATURE.** In addition to references listed elsewhere, Mertens (1934) discusses melanism, Lazell (1964) described predation on bird eggs, MacLean (1974) included a specimen in a study of feeding and locomotor mechanisms in teiid lizards, and the species was included in surveys of chemoreception by Gove (1978, 1979) and Simon (1983).

Ameiva corvina was included in several checklists, keys, and faunal accounts: Garman (1887), Barbour (1914, 1930a,b, 1935,



MAP. The arrow indicates Sombrero Island, the type locality and entire range of *Ameiva corvina*.



FIGURE. *Ameiva corvina* from near the lighthouse on Sombrero Island (photograph by EJC).

1937), Barbour and Loveridge (1929), Dunn (1934), Underwood (1962), Baskin and Williams (1966), Schwartz and Thomas (1975), MacLean et al. (1977), Schwartz and Henderson (1985, 1988), Frank and Ramus (1995), Powell et al. (1996), and Censky and Kaiser (1998).

• **REMARKS.** Censky and Paulson (1992) summarized the status of type specimens. Cope (1862) listed types in the collections of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (ANSP, collected by J.B. Hansen) and the National Museum of Natural History (USNM, collected by A.H. Rüse; mispelled Riise by Barbour and Loveridge 1929). Barbour and Noble (1915) indicated that the USNM specimens might have been given to the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University (MCZ). Two of these specimens were subsequently returned to the USNM (Cochran 1961). Barbour (1914) listed MCZ 5532 as the type specimen (and noted that specimens presumably taken in Haiti by Weinland were undoubtedly in error), Barbour and Noble (1915) listed ANSP 9115–9121 as the "types," Barbour and Loveridge (1929) listed MCZ 3613, 3616, 5531 (actually 5532) as syntypes, and Malnate (1971) listed ANSP 9115–9130 as syntypes. Actual specimens at ANSP are 9115–9118 (with

two specimens tagged 9117), 9120, 9122–9130, and 9134. This series is larger than that reported by Barbour and Noble (1915, but some specimens apparently are now missing. The confusion generated by these conflicting reports led Censky and Paulson (1992) to designate as a lectotype ANSP 9116.

Meristic characters of recently collected specimens (since 1940) differ substantially from those of specimens collected before 1900 (Censky and Paulson 1992); differences that might have resulted from stabilizing selection following flucuations in population size. Censky and Paulson (1992) considered only post-1940 specimens when making comparisons with other species because "they more nearly represent the meristics of the present population."

• **ETYMOLOGY.** The specific epithet, *corvina*, is derived from the Latin *corvinus*, meaning "of ravens," an obvious reference to melanism in these lizards.

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